

# Documents on Diplomacy: Lessons

## Humanitarian Aid in World War I

### A Document-Based Question

Standard: I. Culture  
III. People, Places, and Environments  
V. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions  
VI. Power, Authority, and Governance  
VII. Production, Distribution, and Consumption  
IX. Global Connections  
X. Civic Ideals and Practices

Grade Level: 9–12

Objectives: The student will:

- Analyze primary documents
- Determine the impact of humanitarian aid in World War I
- Assess the diplomatic actions of the United States during World War I

Time: 1 class periods

Materials: Note: The Documents and Images listed below have been specially prepared for the DBQ. Print these two documents for the students:

*Resources Humanitarian Aid in WWI : DBQ Documents*

*Resources: Images of Belgium in WWI*

The two documents contain all of the material listed below.

**1914** *Food for Starving Belgians* (A)

**1915** *The Starvation of Millions* (B)

*The Memoirs of Herbert Hoover* (E)

**1917** *A Question of Military Strategy*

**1918** *Food Blockade*

**1917** *An Appeal from the King* (G)

**1917** *Plight of Refugees* (I)

*Germany Military Rule in Belgium* (C)

*Images of Belgium in World War I*

(D): *A Relief Ship for Belgium*

(F): *U.S. Food Administration "Hunger" poster*

(H): *Sacks of Flour in a Warehouse*

(J): *Decorated Belgian Flour Sack*

(K): *Belgian Man*

Access to the Internet:

- Biography of Herbert Hoover  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/about/presidents/herberthoover>
- Biography of Brand Whitlock  
<http://www.firstworldwar.com/bio/whitlock.htm>  
<http://www.daytonhistorybooks.com/halloffamewhitlock.html>
- Biography of Woodrow Wilson  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/about/presidents/woodrowwilson>
- Biography of King Albert of Belgium  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albert\\_I\\_of\\_Belgium](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albert_I_of_Belgium)

Procedures:

*Activity One: Document Based Question*

**1.** Use materials (Documents/Resources A-K) for a document-based question (DBQ).

**2.** The prompt for the DBQ:

*Humanitarian aid through diplomatic efforts played a major role in the Allied victory in World War I.*

**3.** Allow one class period to answer the prompt.

**4.** Follow up with a discussion of the Allied efforts to provide aid to Europe during WWI. Additionally:

- a. What do we know about Herbert Hoover from these documents?
- b. What skills did Hoover use that were valuable later during his presidency?
- c. Compare the images of World War I Herbert Hoover and President Herbert Hoover.
- d. Discuss the many challenges faced by Brand Whitlock as a United States Ambassador in German-occupied Belgium.
- e. Describe the living conditions in Belgium, Poland, and northern France during World War I.

*Activity 2: Group Analysis of Documents*

**1.** Divide students into groups of 4-5 students, each group representing Herbert Hoover, Ambassador Brand Whitlock, President Woodrow Wilson, or King Albert of Belgium. In larger classes, characters will overlap.

**2.** Before class: compile enough packets—all documents and resources—to provide one per group. Biographies may be shared as well.

- 3.** Have each group:
  - a.** Describe their assigned character's role during World War I.
  - b.** What skills were required by him to best accomplish his job?
  - c.** Could the actions of this person during the War be deemed as HEROIC? Explain why or why not.
- 4.** Each group should report its findings to the class. Identify common themes among groups that shared the same characters.
- 5.** Draw a line on the board and place numbers 1-5 on the line. This is a HERO METER.
- 6.** Have the entire class decide where to place each person on the meter, with 5 being MOST heroic. Students should discuss their placements. ■